

Congressional Progressive Caucus

Co-Chairs

Barbara Lee
Lynn Woolsey

Senate Members

Bernie Sanders

House Members

Neil Abercrombie

Tammy Baldwin

Xavier Becerra

Madeleine Bordallo

Robert Brady

Corrine Brown

Michael Capuano

Julia Carson

Donna Christensen

Yvette Clarke

William "Lacy" Clay

Emanuel Cleaver

Steve Cohen

John Conyers

Elijah Cummings

Danny Davis

Peter DeFazio

Rosa DeLauro

Keith Ellison

Iam Farr

Shaka Fattah

Bob Filner

Harvey Frank

Raul Grijalva

Uis Gutierrez

John Hall

Hil Hare

Laurice Hinchey

Fazie Hirono

Michael Honda

House Jackson, Jr.

Heila Jackson-Lee

Frank Johnson

Stephanie Tubbs Jones

Larry Kaptur

Carolyn Kilpatrick

Ann Kucinich

Tom Lantos

Jim Lewis

David Loebsack

Carolyn Maloney

Jim Markey

Tim McDermott

James McGovern

George Miller

Ben Moore

Richard Nadler

Janet Holmes-Norton

Tim Oliver

Pastor

Natalie Payne

Charles Rangel

Bob Rush

Ida Sanchez

Michael Schakowsky

Joe Serrano

Christine Slaughter

David Solis

Eric Stark

Janet Thompson

Tim Tierney

Jim Udall

Thia Velazquez

Maxine Waters

Debbie Watson

Tim Watt

Henry Waxman

Bob Welch

"71 Strong and Growing"

[Note: 10 new Members added in 110th Congress raising total Caucus Membership to 71, just 6 short of equaling 1/3 of the entire Democratic Caucus and by far the most diverse Caucus in the 109th Congress.]

March 8, 2007

The Honorable John Spratt
Chairman
House Budget Committee
207 CHOB

Dear Mr. Chairman:

First of all, we want to thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to meet with Members and staff of the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) to preview your thinking about the FY08 Concurrent Budget Resolution and to discuss our progressive priorities and concerns. You are always informative and candid, and we appreciate your open-minded approach to the daunting challenge of fashioning a more fiscally-responsible and humane federal budget.

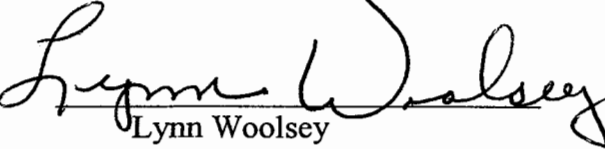
As we underscored during our recent meeting, we reject the disingenuous and grossly unfair budget for FY08 and beyond that President Bush submitted to Congress in early February. While seeking to spend an additional \$200 billion in Iraq and to make permanent his tax cuts that favor the very wealthiest of Americans, he seeks to impose even more financial hardship and debt on hard-working American families and our country's most vulnerable and impoverished population.

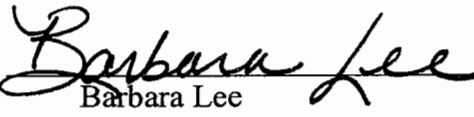
Enough is enough. At a minimum and on behalf of Progressive Caucus Members, we ask that you include in your starting framework for the FY08 Concurrent Budget Resolution and retain in any version ultimately reported from the House Budget Committee two progressive benchmarks: (1) a floor of at least \$450 billion for domestic, non-discretionary spending in FY08; and (2) a ceiling of no more than \$412.7 billion (excluding U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan) as a cost-effective and sufficient level of defense spending in FY08.

For the good of our country, we need a federal budget that points our country in a fundamentally fairer and more responsible direction. Attached is a summary of the two signature benchmarks and twelve highlights of the full ten-year budget plan that CPC Members urge be incorporated in the FY08 Concurrent Budget Resolution, when the House Budget Committee holds its mark-up in coming days.

Thank you again for your thoughtful consideration, as we strive to meet the basic human needs of all Americans and rekindle their hope, while also ensuring a strong national defense and promoting more peace and security at home and abroad.

Sincerely,


Lynn Woolsey
Progressive Caucus Co-Chair


Barbara Lee
Progressive Caucus Co-Chair

**Benchmarks and Top Twelve Highlights for FY08-17 Progressive Caucus
Alternative Budget:**

BENCHMARKS:

- (1) Provide at least \$450 billion for domestic, non-military discretionary spending; and
- (2) Provide at most \$412.7 billion as sufficient defense spending level beneath President Bush's request or cut of \$68.7 billion below the Bush request.

TOP TWELVE HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Iraq** – projects complete U.S. military redeployment out of Iraq during 2007– savings of at least \$187 billion in the next two years;
- **Target waste, fraud, and abuse, starting with Pentagon savings** – projects enactment of the Common Sense Budget Act, which would save at least \$60 billion/year on largely obsolete Cold War weapons systems *plus* billions more in waste, fraud, and abuse in DOD spending identified by the nonpartisan Government Accounting Office (GAO)- savings of at least \$600 billion over ten years;
- **Repeal of Bush tax cuts for the top 1% of taxpayers** -- due to expire in 2010 regardless and beyond – savings of at least \$348 billion;
- **Crackdown on corporate welfare** – projects elimination of various corporate tax loopholes such as deductibility of advertising for imaging purposes and special tax breaks for oil and gas industry and other extraction industries ;
- **SMART Security Alternative to Preemption Doctrine** – shifts some spending and increases other non-military spending to fight root causes of terrorism – 21st century diplomacy, meeting basic human needs (e.g. HIV/AIDS/TB, universal basic education for all);
- **Global Warming and Energy Independence**– funding for immediate, cost-effective steps to redress global warming and the rapid acceleration of renewable energy development;
- **Education for All** – fully fund NCLB and IDEA and improve Teacher Corps and job training;
- **Medicare for All** – affordable, accessible, quality health care for all Americans
- **Guaranteed Veterans' Health Care** – ensure whatever federal funding is needed to provide health care (including mental health care) for All America's veterans (including but not limited to veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan military operations);
- **Fair Shake for Middle-Class** – increase funding to protect fundamental worker rights, enforce fair credit and lending practices, and promote livable wages and safe workplaces;
- **Renew the Social Contract and 21st Century Safety Net** – substantially increase funding for decent affordable housing, anti-hunger programs, and more quality child care; and
- **Rebuild America's Communities** – substantially increase funding for Community Development Block Grants, community policing, and priority clean-up of leaking underground storage tanks that threaten the drinking water of nearly

half of all Americans – a down payment on the implementation of other urgently needed environmental justice programs.